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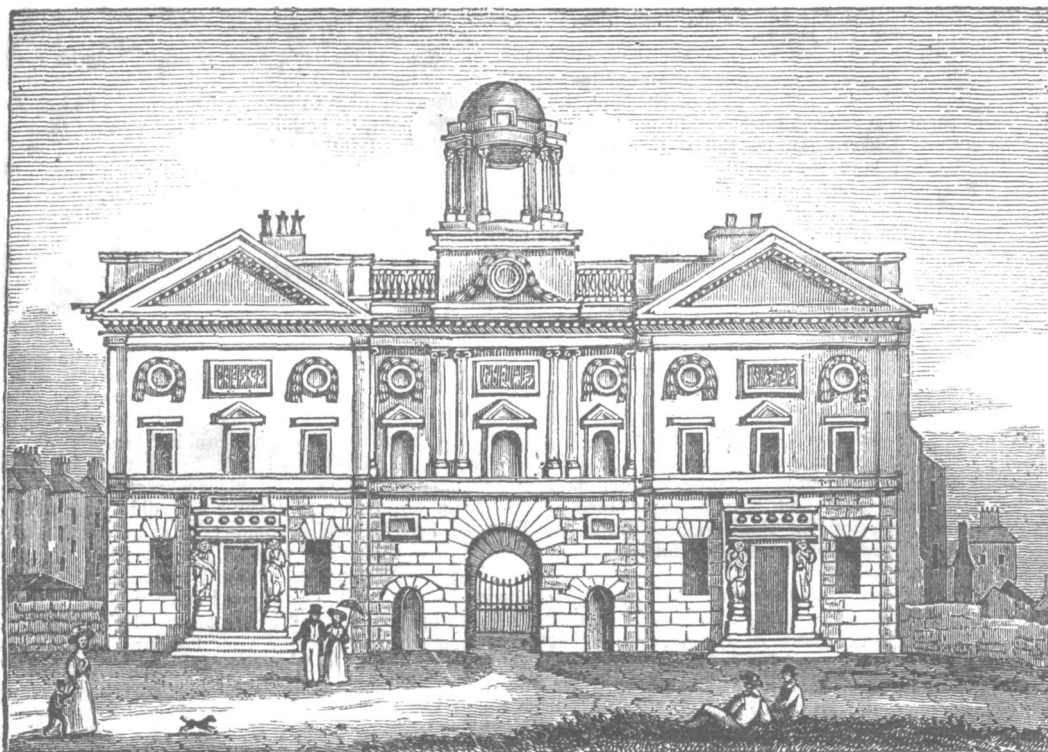
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INNS OF COURT.

In our 18th Number will be found an accurate description of the Law or Four Courts, situated on Inns'-quay, on the north side of the river.

The edifice called the Inns of Court, standing at the upper end of Henrietta-street, presents a beautiful front of hewn stone, consisting of a centre and wings, to the rear of the houses on Constitution-hill. The wings, which extend back 110 feet, present a facade of two stories, surmounted by pediments; over the window of the second story, in the north wing, is an alto-relievo, representing Bacchus and Ceres sacrificing on an antique tripod, attended by the Seasons; and over the front of the south wing, or Prerogative Court, in a similar manner, are represented, Wisdom, Justice, and Prudence, sacrificing on an altar, attended by Truth, Time, and History. On the entablature, in the centre of the building, the lawyers and prelates of Ireland are represented, receiving a translation of the Bible and a charter from Elizabeth.

The doorways, in front of the Dining-hall and Prerogative Court, are ornamented by caryatides,\* supporting a rich cornice, and resting on pedestals. Those at the door of the Dining-hall, are Plenty and Bacchante, with a goblet; and at the entrance of the Prerogative Court and Record Office, are Security and Law, one holding a key, the other a scroll.

Beneath the central building, which is crowned by a beautiful octangular cupola, is a lofty arched gateway, with doors at either side, leading into the space between the Dining-hall and Record Office, which run parallel to each other; and at the farther end is a magnificent corresponding gate, communicating with Henrietta-street.

\* Caryatides are statues employed to support an entablature instead of columns.

Over this are the royal arms, in Portland stone, which, together with all the statuary of the building, were executed by Edward Smith, a Dublin artist of very considerable merit.

The Dining-hall, which occupies the principal part of the north wing, is 81 feet by 42, ornamented by four three-quarter Ionic columns at either end; over which, in circular recesses in the ceiling, are figures, in alto-relievo, representing the four Cardinal Virtues. At the end of the hall, where the benchers' table is placed, the floor is elevated about twelve inches above that of the remaining part, and over the chimney-piece at this end is a portrait of Lord Chancellor Manners. The room is lighted by five circular-headed windows on one side, between which are niches intended to be filled with statues; and on the opposite side are portraits of Lords Avonmore and Manners. The lawyers and law-students dine on one side, and the attorneys on the other side of the hall.

In 1827 a new library was erected on the west side of Henrietta-street, and adjoining to the King's Inns, which is tastefully and commodiously fitted up. The upper part of the building is one spacious hall, measuring 85 feet by 65, with galleries round the entire, and stalls for the books; the lower part of the building consists of rooms for the accommodation of the librarian. On the great stair, leading to the hall of the library, is a painted window of singular beauty, being divided into thirty-nine divisions, containing the arms of the judges and benchers of the King's Inns. This library is entitled to a free copy of every work entered at Stationers' Hall. None but members of the King's Inns are admitted members of the library. The charge of admission is £5. 5s. with some additional fees.

This spacious edifice has been erected at an expense of

£20,000, and reflects great credit on the correct taste of the architect, Mr. Darley.

Before the reign of Edward I. there were no regular courts of Justice nor Inns of Court: the number of Palatinates and Chiefries existing through Ireland, which were governed by the old Brehon-laws, rendered a court of Chancery unnecessary; but an Exchequer was still required. The Brehon laws were of so mild and conciliating a spirit, that a fine (erick) was the only punishment inflicted even for the worst of crimes.

It is manifest that such a system, in those days, must have been liable to infinite abuses, and after an existence of nearly four centuries under the crown of England, the application of them was at length declared to be treasonable, in the 40th of Edward III. by the statute of Kilkenny. The Brehon laws were written in a character called the "Phenian dialect," and the family of Mac Egan alone possessed the secret of decyphering their records, and were in possession of this secret down to the reign of Charles I.—Henry II. is said to have held a court in Dublin, (November, 1172,) but all records or manuscripts relating to it are lost.

The first institution of an Irish Inn of Court took place in the reign of Edward I.: it was called Collet's Inn, and was outside the city walls, where Exchequer-street and George's-street, south, are now built; here also were the superior courts of justice. But, unfortunately, a banditti, from the mountains of Wicklow, watching an opportunity, when the deputy and great part of the military strength were engaged at a distance, entered and plundered the Exchequer, and burned every record. About the same period, both in England and France, a similar attack was made on the Temple, and other public literary establishments.

This obliged the government to remove the seat of justice from without the walls; and the courts were at first appointed to be held in the Castle of Dublin, and then at Carlow. Whilst the Courts and Inns of Law were held in this ambulatory manner, in the reign of Edward III. Sir Robert Preston, Chief Baron of the Exchequer, resigned, for an Inn of Court, his noble mansion, situated where the Royal Exchange now stands, and having a range of offices extending from that to Essex-bridge. On this site Lord Chief Baron Byssie, some years after, built a noble residence, which was taken down, in 1762, to open Parliament-street.

In Preston's Inns the benchers, lawyers, and attorneys had chambers, and for two centuries this Collegiate Society was upheld with dignity. After the death of Sir Robert Preston, the family, which had been honoured by a peerage, in 1478, with the title of Viscount Gormans-town, disputed the claim to the site of Preston's Inn, and the benchers and lawyers were dispossessed. At this time the Courts of Law were held in the Castle of Dublin, which being found inconvenient, the Inns of Court were removed to the dissolved Monastery of Dominicans, called the Monastery of St. Saviour's, where the Four Courts now stand.

In 1542, Henry VIII. assumed, for the first time that any English monarch had done so, the title of King of Ireland, and from the royal founder this society took the denomination of the "King's Inns." It obtained from him grants of land in Michan's parish, &c. besides parliamentary support; and a statute was introduced, obliging each student to reside for two years at an English Inn of Court, to assist in introducing the English practice of law into this kingdom. From this date, the society of King's Inns began to assume importance as a body.

#### OLD FRANK AND HIS STORIES.

NICK NOWLAN, THE NOGGIN WEAVER.

"Well, well, master Thomas, it was the sorry day for me that I told you the first story of the fairies—sure I have never had ease nor peace since; but if I must, I must—so just sit down quietly, and I'll see and rummage my brains for you. Well, then, you must know, when I was a young boy, many an' many a year ago, goin' about the country looking for service, I spent a month or two once with a grand gentleman up the country, that had a mighty quare story told about how the fortune kem into

his family. It was this way, you see:—Once upon a time, one Nick Nowlan, a poor noggin weaver, set off with his sack of noggins, tied by a hay-rope about his middle, to thry an' sell them at a great fair that was in some town there aby Croagh Phadrig, in the county Mayo; and as he had a long way to go, and the weight was ungainly—and, more betoken, the crathur himself was weak and poor wid bad livin', for the poor then wor as badly off every bit as the poor now—God help them, there's little differ betwene them any time—so, for all these raisons, he made his day's journey as short as he could, an' took as many short cuts as lay in his way. Well, as he was dhrawin' nigh to some village, where he intended to pass the night, he bethought that the straight road was a terrible round intirely for a weary man, and so he strucked off into the fields to thry an' reach it afore the night, that was falling so quickly. Well, Sir, he got a bit into the fields, an' wild fields they wor, not all as one as your honour's lawn, or that pyatee field afore us, bless it, and are n't the crops beautiful intirely this saison? So, as I was sayin', he was in the middle of wild fields, an' not a crathur near him, an' the poor Christian's heart began to fail him, when he thought how many in the world wor more than comfortable and him so beggarly an' lonely; so he leant himself down, very sorrowful like, agin the side of a forth that lay in his way, an' set to thinkin', thinkin', until the night closed around him, an' he lost sight of the town, an' couldn't see his way no longer; so he considered 'twas better to take up his night's lodging in the solitary place where he was, than go further an' fare worse, as many a one did, your honour. Well, he fixed himself as comfortable as he could, leaning his back agin the sack of noggins, that was still fast on him, and, in a minute or two, he heard, as he thought, a grate rumblin' inside, and, as it grew louder an' louder, at last the forth opened, and out kem a beautiful crowd of little gentlemen, (the good people, your honour,) running here an' there, just like the boys in Tim Driscoll's whin they're let out; an' one ran here, an' one ran there, cuttin' switches, an' doin' one thing or another—till, where's my horse, says one, an' where's my horse, says another, an' so on it went through the whole of them, an' as fast as they called, sure enough, the horses wor brought, the iligantest horses a young lord ever got across.

"Musha, then," thinks the noggin maker to himself, as soon as he recovered from the surprise—and sure small blame to the crathur to be frekened. 'Musha, then,' thinks he, 'bad cess to the one of yees wants a horse so bad as me, that's walking, on my own wake weary legs, this whole blessed week; an' sure if good horses are to be had for the axin', he'd be the mighty fool intirely that 'ud want one an' be ashamed to thry his luck. So,' says he, easily like, 'where's my horse?'

"My dear, the word was scarce out of his mouth, whin a fine black bull calf cantered betwene his legs, an' hoised him up on his back, noggins an' all.

"Are we all ready?" says he that was at the head ov the gang.

"All," says the crowd.

"Thin, away," says he, 'till I bid you stop.'

"An', sure enough, away they went, and that was the goin' that left the wind behind it—the runnin' at the steeple chase beyant was nothin' to it. You see, there 'ud a church or a three rise up afore them in the distance, an' afore they could know what it was, my dear, 'twas miles behind them; and so they went on, on, sweepin' all afore them, until they kem to a wide river, that you'd think no horse livin', lettin' alone a calf, 'ud offer at—but over it they flew, my jewels, calf an' all; an' as the calf kem to to the other side, the sack of noggins gave such a bang against the poor man's hinder ind, savin' your honour's presence, as amost sent him sprawlin' about the road. Well, he couldn't help looking round at the leap—and sure it was the wonderful leap ov the world—and says he, 'Sweet was your heels, for a calf, but you knocked a sough out of me. Oh, thin, iv I had you at the fair ov Banagher, what a fortune I'd make ov you, ail in a slap; ochone! ochone! but the poor man's luck never comes to him in the right time.'

"My good man," says the head fairy to him, mighty